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The Legends of
Sapta Tathagata

A book illustrated on Ujay Bajracharya's Paubha paintings

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THE LEGENDS OF SAPTA TATHAGATA

A Book Illustrated on Ujay Bajracharya's Paubha Paintings

Naresh Shakya
M.A. Buddhist Studies

Lalit Youth Foundation
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Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

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Layout & Cover Design : Devendra Man Shakya

Paintings by :
Ujay Bajracharya
Bhinchhebahal, Lalitpur, Nepal.
Ph.: +977 1 5539914
Cell : +977 9841 465752
E-mail : ujaybajracharya@hotmail.com
Website : www.ktmvalleypainting.com

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FOREWORD

The Newar community of artisans has a long tradition of discovering new talent and Ujay, though only 28, is among the youngest gifted and accomplished artisans in a tradition dominated by those who reach similar acclaim for their knowledge and expertise much later in their careers.

As an integral part of a new generation of Paubha painters, Ujay captures the true essence of the imagery while incorporating his own original inspirations. The art of the past provides a never-ending stimulus for the creativity of the present. His innovative and creative ideas capture the essential balance that allows for the authenticity of content while establishing his own identity.

His driving desire and courageous spirit has become an inspiration for a new generation of Paubha painters. As a teacher and young visionary, he has provided the catalyst for other young artisans to venture off the traditional path of thousands of years of established protocol.

Ujay, in the forefront of his field of emerging artisans deserves the recognition, respect and encouragement from us as he has the skills, the knowledge and the deep desire to be an inspiration for his generation.

The inauguration of this book at the U.S. international exhibition highlighting his achievements reaches out for the first time beyond Asia to a western international audience enhancing the world's perspective on Paubha Painting. I would like to acknowledge and commend his commitment of time for the conception, research, and execution of this project.

BARBARA E. COOK
Curator
Living Treasures of Nepal -
Masters of Ancient Techniques in a Modern World

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GOODWILL MESSAGE

It is a matter of great pleasure to "The Organization of The Buddhist Monasteries of Lalitpur", that Ujay Bajracharya, Bhinchhebahal, Lalitpur, the Painter of Paubha was a product of this organization. Mr. Ujay Bajracharya was an excellent trainee of " Buddhist Art & Sculpture Training Center", run by this organization few years before.

After completing the training, he became an instructor in same training center. His skillful hand and diligence made him a good instructor. We are proud of him and his skillful hand in traditional Paubha Painting. He has adopted this job as his profession. We thank him and wish him for his bright future.

We congratulate him for his successful Paintings in this book.

Babu Raj Bajracharya
President
The Organisation of Buddhist Monasteries of Lalitpur, Nepal.

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GOODWILL MESSAGE

Buddha basically means one who has attained enlightenment. More specifically, they did it without a teacher to show them the Dharma (Teachings of Buddhism), and then taught the Dharma to others. It is believed there have been infinite Buddhas with one during each World Age, among them 29 Buddhas are the most popular ones. The Buddha is always reported as referring to himself as the Tathagata instead of using the pronouns me, I or myself. This serves to emphasize by implication that the words are uttered by one who has transcended the human condition, who is beyond the otherwise endless cycle of rebirth, beyond all death and dying, beyond all suffering.

Among many art forms, Painting is one of it. A Painting known as "Tangka", "Thanka" or "Tanka", in Newari language it is also known as Paubha Painting usually depicting a Buddhist deity, famous scene, or a mandala (a Magic circle depicting regimen of reigning deity) of some sorts are one form of art popular among travelers, monks etc due to its portability.

Originally, thangka Painting became popular among traveling monks because the scroll Paintings were easily rolled and transported from monastery to monastery. These thangka served as important teaching tools depicting the life of the Buddha, various influential lamas and other deities and boddhisattwas.

Nepal developed a distinct style in Paubha Painting. A great variety of Tantric Buddhist images rarely depicted in Indian art were preserved in Newari Paubha Paintings. Newari artists played significant role in developing Buddhist art and crafts around the world. In this context, it is really soothing to know about this book published to give insight into Buddhism and its art. I believe this book will delves in detail about the essence of seven tathagatas and their contribution in Buddhism. This book could broaden the horizon of Nepalese Buddhist art and crafts to the readers and understand complexity of it. I would like to express my best wishes to the Artist of this book, and I hope his endeavor to propound this book to the readers will be successful one.

Bikash Ratna Dhakhwa
President
Federation of Handicraft Association of Nepal.

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Namo Buddhayé; Namo Dharmayé; Namo Sanghayé
Homage to triple gems

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The Origin of Buddhist Art.

The history of Painting in Buddhism is very long. It seems to have begun from the Buddha's time itself. To make it clearer, there is an interesting story told about the two kings bimbisara and Udrayana from the cities of Magadha and Rauruka respectively. These kings are said to keep exchanging gifts with each other. Once Udrayana presented an expensive gift to Bimbisara who, in return, thought of sending a picture of Lord Buddha as his precious gift to his friend. He commissioned a skilled artist to draw a picture of the Buddha. Much as he tried, he failed to sketch the Buddha's image. Knowing this difficulty, the Buddha caused his reflection to appear in the water, thus enabling the artist to draw the Painting easily. In this way, it is clear that the history of Painting began with the portrait of Lord Buddha which was commissioned by King Bimbisara.

There is another story about Mahanama, king of Kapilavastu. A maidservant in the palace, named Rohita was serving the queen in those days. One day the queen gave a jewel to Rohita telling her to hand it over to Mahanama who was staying very far at that moment. Rohita was on her way so that she could carry out the queen's command. All of sudden, a girl attacked and killed her. Thus Rohita was killed. Since she died with an earnest faith in the Buddha she was reborn as a princess in the island of Sri Lanka. She used to practice the Buddha's teaching there. One day, she obtained an image of Lord Buddha created from the dazzling rays of light emitted by the Buddha. This image, so the story says, is known as "an image created from the rays of a sage".

Divyavadana gives yet another account of how Buddhist Painting originated for the first time as what subsequently came to be known as "a wheel of life". According to the text, the wheel of life was originally painted over the gateway of the Veluvana Vihara in Rajagriha at the instruction of Lord Buddha himself.

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According to the great master Acarya Asanga, every practitioner should learn five subject: Philosophy, Art, Grammar, Logic and Medicine. He has classified art into: Painting, Sculpture, Carving, Engraving and so forth. Of them, the Painting is said to be the best of all.

"Painting is said by Nagnajit to be the best of these arts;

Just as Sumeru is foremost among the mountains,
Just as the Ganga is foremost among the rivers,
Just as the Sun is foremost among the celestial bodies,
Just as the Garuda is the king of birds,
Just as Indra is the foremost among Gods,
So is Painting the foremost among the skills

References about the Painting can also be found in the Buddhist scriptures. The physical measurements of Buddha and the places where Painting of Buddha should be made are mentioned in the Vinaya sutras. In Sanskrit literature, Pratimalaksana is one of the sutras (dated around 10th century AD) which explains the Buddha's physical attributes to be used for making Buddha images. Similarly, tantric texts like Manjusrimulakalpa, Samvarodaya etc. explain at length the methods of making images and deities and spirits.

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Short history of Paubha Painting in Nepal.

As the Painting on cloth was highly perishable there are no remains of the Painting of the earlier time in Nepal. The art in Kathmandu can is said to be in excellent state as we could relate to the sculptures of various figures in the early centuries. The sculpture of Jaya Varma (185 AD) which is presently in the national Museum is the oldest dated sculpture. According to Nepalese history, licchavi period (400-800 AD) is said to be the golden period of Nepalese art. Within the confined area of Kathmandu valley, several very beautiful sculptures dating from this period had been found. These include the stone images of buddhanilkantha (seventh century) vishnumurti changu narayan (ninth century) and the Avalokitesvara image at srighavihara and so on. It is very important to learn the line art before you could create other arts like the sculpture and other work of art.

Studying the advanced form of art, we could imagine that the Painting must have been in its peak as sketching is essential for other form of arts as well and it could be said that there had been a very highly developed art in writing and unfortunately, not a single Painting from the period has been found. This may be because of two factors- fragility of Painting on silk, cotton or the wall Paintings and the lack of scientific technique of preservation.

For the studying of the Painting the good sources are the miniatures like the grantha chitra. Buddhists normally have lots of scriptures and manuscripts which content the art which could also prove the presence of Paintings.

The earliest records of such Painting from Nepal are in a manuscript of the Ashtasarasrika prajnaparamita copied in Nepal sambat 135/ 1015 A D, now in Cambridge university library. Like in eastern India, in Nepal also the Paintings were executed on the folios as well as on the insides of the wooden covers of the manuscripts. The two covers of a manuscript of the same text, in the collection of the writer of this foreword, supply the text specimens. The manuscript was copied in N.S. 148/1028 AD and in the Paintings on these covers, apparently contemporaneous

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to the date of the copy, the eastern style is found to have taken firm roots in Nepal valley. These facts say out loud the development of the Painting in Nepal.

We can assume that the Painting drawn on the miniature scale could be further enlarged and painted on the walls and on the clothes. This well shows that the Painting of the walls and on the clothes which is called Thangka or Paubha here in the Kathmandu valley by the Newar artists had been fully developed and of course there is a lot of Indian influence regarding the pala art in Bengal. But with study of all the miniatures and different art work we could say that people of Kathmandu valley developed their own unique style and later they transport them to Tibet. So all the early Thangkas, before Tibet developed their own style all the Thangka had the Nepalese influence no doubt the touch of pala art. We could say Nepalese art did not merely become a regional branch of Indian art; rather, it retained its uniqueness and individual character

It is found described that trade flourished between India and Nepal during the transition period (879-1200 AD). Transition period in Nepal is the time when there was the changeover of an era. Though there was no clear history of the rule but this was an excellent era for the development of Buddhism and Buddhist art. This is time when there was development of Buddhism in Tibet. Shanrakshit, Padmasambhava and Kamalsila likes of these scholars went to Tibet via Nepalese territories. There is clear record of Dipamkara Srijnana Atisa staying in thabahil for almost a year before proceeding to land of snow, Tibet in the year 1042 AD. Kathmandu valley was a real meeting point. There established close cultural relation. The art and trade really flourished. The Mahayana Buddhism and Sanskrit learning really was enhanced and advanced. The Sanskrit text were copied and preserved in the baha and bahi of Kathmandu valley. At the time when there were destructions of Buddhist centers in India, the pundits and Buddhist scholars from India took refuge in Nepal and Nepalese had opportunity to copy or get the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts from them. With the copying the manuscript they must have learnt the technique of Painting the miniature arts as well.

Probably, the portrayals of tathagatas were quite common around this time. The style is mostly influence by the pala style which has the characteristic features of enthroned central Buddha in flanked by two standing Bodhisattvas and a chorus of seated ones, a row of deities set in niches forms a pediment for the composition .

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Dr.P.Pal writes:

"Of all the foreign artists working in Tibet, the most sought after were the Newari, who were among the most ancient settlers in the Kathmandu valley in Nepal. Newar artists were specially popular with the Sakyapa in southern Tibet and inscriptions in the Ngor monastery relates how the founder imported artists from Nepal to paint the murals. Indeed, the 15the century Ngor style may well be regarded as simply an extension of the Nepalese tradition of Painting"

Again, he says:

"Monasteries of the Sakyapa religion order in Tibet seemed especially partial to Nepalese craftsmen. After the 12th century, when most of the Buddhist monasteries in India were destroyed, Nepal filled the vacuum for a time for the Tibetans."

With final collapse of the pala at the end of 12th century and completion of the islamicisation of the northern India, pala Buddhist most devoted followers of the central Tibet turn in for the spiritual guide and art guidance to Kathmandu valley. In terms of Painting what occurred was the appearance in images in pala style by valley artists for the Tibetan market. The "export" of the art continued till the 16th century by the time Tibetan developed enough confident to make their own style and do not have to depend of the pala or Nepalese style. And interestingly this time on the patronage of Buddhism by the valley predominantly Hindu rulers went into a sharp decline and this began a slow deterioration in the valley's Buddhist community and it activities which continue to this day.

Nepalese style of Painting firmly established around the 13th century at the time of sakyapa sect. the art work mostly commissioned by the sakya pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. While there are traces of Bengali style Painting in the murals of Zhwa lu monastery, the majority of 13th century Paintings found in Sakya monasteries are in Nepalese style.

We do not have any Nepalese Paubha Paintings dating from earlier than the thirteenth century. Most ancient Paubha Paintings are now preserved not in

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Nepal but in American and European Museums. The Painting of Amitabh Buddha in the Los Angeles County Museum is believed to be the earliest Nepalese Painting. The Painting is not dated but it style resembles that of the manuscript Painting in Astasaharsrika Prajnaparamita (1015 AD). Also same style is the Paubha of Ratnasambhava in the Los Angles County Museum (early 13th century).

The strong torch bearer of Nepalese art could be said as Arniko. In 1260 AD, Kublai khan, the great ruler of china and suzerain of the Mongol state and Tibet, asked his teacher Lama Phagspa (1235-80 AD), to erect a golden stupa in Tibet. The Lama extended the invitation to the Newari artist. At the time in Nepal, the ruler was Jaya Bhima Malla (1258-71 AD) and he managed to gather 80 artists. The chief of the entire artists was Arniko who was just 17 at the time. The erection of golden stupa was conducted in the year 1262 AD. He was later invited to Beijing and stayed there for a long time. It is believe he was a versatile artist who was a painter, an architect to build the stupa, a sculptor. It is believed he Painting many Paubha in china also.

In the early 13th century AD Nepalese artists in Tibet reached a high degree of sophistication. In 1429 AD, Nepalese artists decorated the chapel of Ngor monastery with the Mandalas, patas and portraits of the Sakyapa masters. The impact of Newar Art was extended to Tibet and China in various times. A group of thangkas bear Chinese inscriptions of the Ming period corresponding to the following dates 1474,1477,1478,1479 and 1513 AD.

Interestingly, Newar artists worked in Tibet and brought back to Nepal several Paintings which had been executed in Tibetan monasteries. Today in Nepal there are several examples of Newar Paubha Paintings which are executed in Tibet. Newar Painting was influenced by the Tibetan style from the 17th century AD onwards. Thereon, the Tibeto-Newar style evolved.

In discussion of the Newari Painting we can't overlook the impact of Indian style, especially Rajput and Moghul, from the 17th century AD onwards. We have several Newari Paubha, especially long scroll Painting which have the Indian influence. These influences resulted from frequent contacts between Moghul India and Pratap Malla, king of Kathmandu in 17th century AD.

Lastly, thought Nepalese artists produce art objects in foreign styles, be they Tibetan, Kashmirian, Bengali, Chinese or Indian, should not be misinterpreted. In Kathmandu valley Newari artists produced their own indigenous style both in sculpture and Painting. They continued to do work of art in their style even in the contemporary times.

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The Sapta Tathagata

The Sapta Tathagata are said to be important Buddhas who had appeared in this samsara for the benefit of all sentient beings. The seven Tathagatas are Buddha Vipashyi, Buddha Sikhi, Buddha Vishvabhu, Buddha Krakuchchanda (1st Buddha of present fortunate aeon bhadrakalpa), Buddha Kanakamuni, Buddha Kasyapa, Buddha Shakyamuni. The Bhadrakalpila sutra mentions the advent of one thousand Buddha in this world for the benefit of sentient beings in this fortunate aeon (bhadrakalpa). Four of them, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kasyapa and Sakyamuni Buddha have already appeared, 96 Buddhas have yet to appear in this aeon.

In the Mahapadana Sutta, Sakyamuni Buddha narrates about the previous Buddhas with their short biography. This discourse was given at Savatthi to the bhikkhus who were one day discussing the Buddha's knowledge of past existences. He told them about the last seven Buddhas, with a detailed life story of one of them, the Vipashvi Buddha, recalling all the facts of the Buddhas, their social rank, name, clan, life-span, the pairs of Chief Disciples, the assemblies of their followers, their attainments, and emancipation from defilements.

The Buddha explained that his ability to remember and recall all the facts of past existences was due to his own penetrating discernment as well as due to the devas making these matters known to him.

Here, the artist attempts to bring out the exquisitely beautiful Paintings of the seven tathagatas.

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ॐ शिखि बुद्धाय नमः॥

OM SIKHI BUDDHAYA NAMO

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OM VISVABHU BUDDHAYA NAMO

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OM SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHAYA NAMO

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1. Buddha Vipashvi

According to Svayambhu Purana, the first Buddha to enter the Nepal Valley was Buddha Viphashyi. He was born in the city of Bandumati to the king Bhanduman and his wife Bhandumatidevi, ninety one aeons (kalpa) ago. He enjoyed his worldly life for 80000 years. He practiced the austerities for 8 months after his great renunciation and attended the perfect Buddhahood (samyak sambodhi).

From the Nagarjuna hill, Buddha vipashvi is said to have planted the seed of lotus on a big lake called Nagadaha which is now called Kathmandu valley.

He threw the lotus seed into the lake. Seeing this, his disciples asked him why he did that. He answered that there would appear a self originated divine manifestation of promodial Buddha from Akanistha Bhuwan. He said people would call it Svayambhu. He predicted that bodhisattva called Manjushree would drain the water off the valley and make it a habitable land. The Jatamatrochcha hill was thus blessed by Buddha Vipashvi. To commemorate this auspicious act of planting seed by Buddha Vipashvi, a special festival is celebrated till today by the inhabitants of the valley dweller as the lhuti purnima in the month of March.. At that time Satyadharma Bodhisattva, who was to become Shakyamuni Buddha accompanied Buddha Vipashvi.

The sculpture of Buddha Vipashvi is rarely found. He is said to be illustrated in the earth touching gesture (bhumisparsa mudra). He is depicted as having a fairly yellow or golden complexion.

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2. Buddha Sikhi

In due course of time lord Sikhi Buddha knowing that a self originated divine light had appeared on the beautiful blooming thousand petal lotus, came to pay home to it with his disciple along with Kshemaraja Grahapati who was to become Shakyamuni Buddha.

According to some textual sources, Sikhi Buddha was born 31 aeons ago in Arunavati. His father's name was Aruna and mother's Prabhavati. His wife was Sabbakama and his son was Atula. He enjoyed the worldly life for 70000 years. After his renunciation (mahabhiniskramana) he practiced for eight months and attained enlightenment under the shade of Punarika tree.

According to Svayambhu purana, he is said to have composed a hymn in praise of lord swayambhu and predicted that from the root of the lotus an image of Nairatmya devi would appear. The discourse with such prediction took place on Dhyanochcha Mountain on the southern part of Kathmandu valley. To commemorate the day of arrival of lord Sikhi Buddha a festival is still held in the New Year Day of Nepalese Calendar.

He was called Sikhi because his special head protuberance (usnisa) stood up like flame (sikha). He is normally depicted with his right in the fearless gesture (abhayamudra) and the left hand in the meditation gesture (dhyanamudra). In some sculptures found in china the left hand is shown in the gesture of giving (varadamudra)

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3. Buddha Visvabhu

Buddha Bhisvabhu is said to have come to Nagadaha to pay his respect to the svaymbhu joytirupa. Buddha Visvabhu offered 125000 flowers from the eastern mountain called Phullochcha now called Pulchowk.

He was born in the city called Anuparam/Anoma. He was born as son of king Sujit and queen Yasavati. He had a son Suppa Buddha from his wife Sucitta. He enjoyed his worldly life for 6000 years. After his great renunciation he attained enlightenment under the sala tree *(shorea robusta)*. It is said he practiced great penance for six months. He is said to have lived for 60000 years and attained mahaparinirvana at the place called Khomaram.

At the time Bodhisattva Pravatakshya who was to become Shakyamuni later, was with Buddha Bhisvabhu. He predicted the water of the nagadaha would deplete and many holy pilgrims would evolve. He is normally shown bearing the gesture of turning the dharma wheel (dharmacakramudra).

Bodhisattva Manjusri was glad to see the glorious light of Adi buddha. He determined to drain the water off the lake so that it would become habitable and so that people would earn merit for generations to come. For this act Lord Bipashvi buddha sent his chief bodhisattva Parbatkshya, who was to become Shakyamuni and bodhisattva Ganganganja to Kathmandu valley to pay homage to Lord swayambhu, he also gave them a golden lotus to offer to bodhisattva Manjushree who had performed the outstanding act of founding Kathmandu valley. Bodhisattva Manjushree founded a city called Manjupattan which extended up to the area of Guhyeshvari shrine in Kathmandu. To commemorate this act a white chaitya called Manjushree Memorial chatiya was erected at the western part of swayambhu hill. A festival is still held in January to commemorate the date of of Manjushree bodhisattva from Great China. Millions of visitors come here to pay homage to this Bodhisattva of learning. According to the lunar calendar the date corresponds to Magh Sukla Panchami.

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4. Buddha Krakuchchanda

Buddha krakuchchanda was born in the city of Ksemavati. His father was Brahmana Agnidutta and mother Visakha/Visvacini Devi. His wife was Virocamana and his son was Uttara. Because he was enlightened under the Sirisa tree. As a Buddha he gave his first discourse near the city of Makila to 84000 monks.

Buddha krakuchchanda was the first Buddha of the current aeon which is called fortunate Aeon (Sanskrit: Bhadrakalpa). According to Bhadrakalpa surtra it is said that one thousand Buddhas would appear in succession. The present Shakyamuni is the 4th Buddha who has already appeared.

Lord krakuchchanda Buddha came to pay homage to Svayambhu with his chief disciples, Jyotipala and Gunadhvaja. This Jyotipala was to be future Buddha Shakyamuni. After paying homage to lord Svayambhu he paid homage to Nairatmya devi (Godess of non self), consort of hevajra. Then he climbed the Siddhi Fullochcha mountain, now called Sivapuri Hill, in the northern part of Kathmandu valley. There he preached extensively the doctrines of 37 factors of Enlightenment for Shravakas, six perfections of bodhisattvas and yogic methods of yogis. There he also ordained 700 disciples and caused a spring to issue forth by uttering some mantras. This place is currently called vagdvara and it is from this place that the Bagmati River originated.

The sculpture of Buddha Krakuchchanda is also rarely found. Normally, Krakuchchanda is depicted in varadamudra with his left hand holding the hem of the robe.

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5. Buddha Kanakamuni

Kankamuni buddha (Pali: Konagamana) is said to be the second buddha of this Bhadrakalpa. He was born to the father Brahmana Yakshadutta and mother Uttarani in the city called Shobhavati. His wife was Rucigatta and his son was Sathavaha. As gold *(kanaka)* rained on the day of his birth he was called kanaka-muni. He obtained supreme enlightenment under the foot of Pundarika tree after the six months of austere practice. His first dharma teaching was attended by more than 30000 monks near Sudarsana nagar. He stayed in the Shobhitarama Mahavihar and gave the Buddhist teaching to the great monks of the time like Bhayashra, Bhardwaja. He gave Buddhist teaching to numerous monks and helped them attain enlightenment. The future Shakyamuni was Suvarnaraja Mahajana in his time and he was caretaker of the Sangha.

Kanakamuni Buddha came to Svayambhu in his lifetime to pay homage to Jyotirupa and former Buddhas. Here he preached the Buddha's doctrine extensively. After his parinirvana a stupa was erected near Kapilavastu in Niglihawa in the western Terai region of Nepal. This is confirmed by the Ashokan Pillar inscription which runs thus:

- Devanam piyena piyadasin lagina codasavasa (visi) tena:
- Budhasa Konakamanasa thube dutryam vadhita.
- (visativa) savisitena atana agaca mahiyite.....

Trans:

The beloved of the gods, king Priyadarsina,(when) crowned fourteen years, enlarged the stupa of buddha Kanakmuni to double (its former size): and (when) crowned twenty years, himself came (here) worshipped. and a stone pillar was erected.

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This inscription is found in a broken pillar in the Nepalese Terai, on the western bank of large tank now called Nigalisagara, 13 miles northwest of Rummindei. Hiuen Tsang visited this spot. He refers to an inscribed pillar which stood in front of a relic stupa of Buddha Kanakamuni, but no remains of any stupa have been found near the pillar. He further states that the pillar was about 20ft high surmounted by the figure of lion, but the combined length of two existing pieces is more than 20ft. the date of Ashoka's visit is assigned to 249BC.

Kanakamuni Buddha is normally depicted yellow with the right hand showing abhayamudra and the left hand showing dhyanamudra.

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6. Buddha Kasyapa

Kasyapa Buddha was the third Buddha of this bhadrakalpa. He was born in a Brahmin family and his father was Brahmadutta and mother Dhanavati. His wife was Sunanda and he had a son called Vijitasen. He was born in the city of Benaras. He practiced the penance for only seven days. He attained supreme enlightenment under the Banyan tree. He gave his first sermon to 10 million monks.

In course of time, Buddha kasyapa came to Kathmandu valley from Benaras to pay homage to Lord Svayambhu as had been done by previous Buddhas. At that time Jyoti Raj bodhisattva, who was to be later Shakyamuni Buddha was following with this Buddha along with such chief disciples as Tisya, Uttama and Sotthia. After performing worship, he returned to his country. He then went to Gaud (probably modern Orissa in India). In that city there lived a pious king, Prachanda Deva, who used to subdue his enemies and appreciated the deeds of the sages. After taking blessings and instructions from Tathagata Kasyapa, he went to Kathmandu, renouncing all his kingdom. Later, King Prachanda Deva paid his homage to Lord Swayambhu and became a disciple of Bhikshu Gunakara. Bhikshu Gunakara ordained and initiated him in the sutras and tantras. He was then called Sanatasri. Bhikshu Sanatasri, thinking that in later period people with evil mind might destroy this self originated divine light, decided to cover this divine flame by erecting a stupa over it. Bhikshu Gunakara, a disciple of bodhisattva Manjusri gave him permission to consecrate the construction of this stupa and conferred on him the title of Vajracarya. Since then he was called Santikara Acharya. After completing the stupa he went to retreat in Santipura.

Buddha Kasyapa is always shown in the yellow color. He is always depicted with the right hand in varada mudra and left hand in dhyana mudra. He always sits on a lotus on the lion throne.

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7. Buddha Shakyamuni

The fourth Buddha of this fortunate aeon is Buddha Shakyamuni. He is called Buddha, a fully Awakened one, because he has realized the potential of his inner being and has removed all obscurations and has developed all the positive qualities. There had been countless buddhas who appeared and will continue to appear on this earth, buddha Shakyamuni was the one who regenerated the teaching of Enlightened being of our present time.

Buddha Shakyamuni was born in Kapilavastu in Nepal some 2600 years ago. His father was Suddhodhana and mother Maya Devi. His wife was Yashodhara and had a son called Rahula.

Lord buddha renounced the world at the age of 29 and executed the penance for 6 years. Later, he realized the futility of self mortification and excessive indulgence. This realization comprehend the middle path which lead to teaching that showed the path to liberation from suffering of birth and death and supreme enlightenment of Buddhahood. This is symbolized by Dharmacakra mudra of the Buddha. Buddha Shakyamuni preached 84000 dharma skandhas mostly in sutra and tantra to suit the different degrees of intelligence to his disciples out of great compassion. He performed many different buddha activities for 45 years in this Indian subcontinent for benefit of all the sentient beings.

All the Sutra and Tantra teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni are said to be the means of liberation of this samsara or the path that lead to supreme enlightenment. In the Svayambhu Purana, it is mentioned that Buddha Shakyamuni visited Kathmandu valley to pay homage to Svayambhu and delivered the teaching on the origin of Svayambhu stupa as per request of Bodhisattva Maitreya.

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The origin of the Buddha Shakyamuni image goes back to period of king Kanishka. Anthropomorphic image of Buddha Shakyamuni started from the Gandhara and Gupta period. At the present time, the images of buddha Shakyamuni can be found in large numbers carved in various materials like stone, metals, clayware, in Paintings and other forms. He is depicted in various postures. In Nepal he is commonly portrayed in Bhumisparsa mudra i.e. earth touching gesture with yellow robes. The common attributes of Buddha Shakyamuni are the Usnisha, on the crown of his head, Urnakosha between eyebrows, long lobed ears. He is always shown in the golden color. He has 32 major and 80 minor marks of Sambhogakaya Buddha. he is always seen with the pinda patra (alms bowl) over the hand on the lap. He can been seen in various vitarka mudra, dhyana mudra, dharmacakramudra and other mudras.

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The Members of Lalit Youth Foundation

President
Prachanda Shakya
Artist : Embossing Metal Work
Email : nepalthtcenter@yahoo.com

Vice President
Rabindra Shakya
Artist : Metal Statue Carving
Email : nayocraft@yahoo.com

Secretary
Ujay Bajracharya
Artist : Paubha Painting
Email : ujaybajracharya@yahoo.com

Treasurer
Surendra Shakya
Artist : Metal Statue
Email : sunil_shakya55@hotmail.com

Executive Members

Manoj Shakya
Artist : Stone Carving
Email : carving@hotmail.com

Sanjay Bajracharya
Artist : Thanka Painting

Saroj Shakya
Artist : Embossing on Metal
Email : chaitya_arts@yahoo.com

Members

Rajesh Bajracharya
Artist : Metal Statue Carving

Rubin Shakya
Artist : Metal Statue

Sajib Shakya
Artist : Paubha Painting
Email : luckysaziv@hotmail.com

Pradip Shakya
Artist : Metal Statue

Lekh Raj Shakya
Artist : Metal Statue Carving
Email : lekhraj_shakya@yahoo.com

Prabin Ratna Bajracharya
Artist : Thanka Painting

Niroj Ratna Bajracharya
Artist : Metal Statue Carving

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Prachanda Shakya
President,
Lalit Youth Foundation
Lalitpur.

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FEW WORDS FROM THE ARTIST

The word "Paubha" derived from the word PATRA BHATARAK, where patra means sheet and bhatarak means god. Paubha is a portrait of specially Buddhist god and goddess delivering spiritual, religious and iconographic message.

The Paubha Painting which has the history of more than 1000 yrs was originated by the Newars, the native people of Kathmandu Valley. This form of art is the identity of Newars and the living treasures of our country and even of the world today. So, our responsibility is to preserve these kinds of art form for our next generations creating the new one at the same time. Youth are the face for tomorrow and they should be given the right opportunity and show them the right path in preserving the tradition.

This exhibition "Living Treasures of Nepal- Masters of Ancient Techniques in a Modern World" held in Kennesaw State University, Georgia, US will be a great milestone in preserving the Traditional Art and Culture of our country, Nepal and I hope this exhibition will also help encouraging the youths in this field. For this I would like to thank Kirstie Tepper, Museum professional and Mary Elizabeth Watson for their support in this exhibition. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Dr. Lin A. Hightower, Professor of Visual Art, Kennesaw State University for the support and releasing this book. The special thanks to Barbara E. Cook for being the curator for the show.

My thanks also go to all the members of Lalit Youth Foundation for publishing this book illustrated on my Paubha Paintings and to my team Rabindra Shrestha, Surja Muni Shakya, Ujjwal Raj Bajracharya and Rakesh Dangol.

UJAY BAJRACHARYA
PAUBHA ARTIST

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About The Artist

Mr. Ujay was born in the year 1981 in the family of Bajracharyas at the premises of Mayur Varna Mahabihar, Bhinchhe Bahal, Lalitpur. His parents are Rajbhai Bajracharya and Sanunani Bajracharya.

Ujay graduated in Fine art & Buddhist studies from Fine Art Campus and Patan Multiple Campus respectively. In 1998, he participated in traditional Thanka Painting course organized by Painting and Sculpture training School arranged by Buddhist Monastery Association, Aksheshwor Mahabihar. He has done his first solo exhibition in Susan's collection in 2006. He has participated in more than a dozen of national shows and in four international shows in Bangkok, Delhi, Mumbai and Georgia, USA. He has made thirteen sand Mandalas including the Nepal's largest sand art mandala in United World Trade Center, Kathmnadu.

Ujay has coordinated few national shows as being the coordinator of Buddhist art and literature sub committee, YMBA. He is associated with Nepal Traditional Handicraft Training Center as a traditional painting instructor. He has restored the historical temples of Patan. His Painting has received the first prize in Painting competition organized by Nepal Bhasa Academy and received appreciations at national exhibitions and has been collected by the art lovers throughout the world.

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